



October 2018

St. John's Eagle

The Newsletter of St. John's Episcopal Church

A Message from Our Rector: Daily Miracles

By Rev. Megan Castellan

We're now into fall and the start of a new academic year, and it amazes me that I've only been here with you at St. John's for barely six months. That time seems to have flown; in one sense, I feel like I've just arrived, and in another, that I've been here for years.

With the start of the program year, as we start up all our various activities here at the church, it strikes me just how much faithful ministry happens around this church. Every week, people willingly give their time and energy to practice a reading, or greet at the front door, or count the offerings, or clean the silver, or make the coffee. Others are working with Loaves and Fishes to make sure everyone in Ithaca has at least one good meal a day. Still others come and provide their musical talents, and others just give of their free time to worship God with us in this place.

This may not seem like a big deal, but consider that in 2018, there is precious little social pressure that would urge a person to go to church. Indeed, there is quite a lot of the opposite. Many are the forces that would keep a person from our doors, and so how blessed are we when anyone finds their way to us, and finds here an experience of God's love?

In a world as frightening as ours can be, ministry, wherever and however it happens, is a bit of a miracle. Whenever we come together and serve one another, care for one another, and endeavor to live as Christ asks us to live—it's a miracle. Let us take a moment to notice with gratitude these miracles in our daily lives.

You can read Mother Megan's sermons on her blog, Red Shoes, Funny Shirt, at <https://redshoesfunnyshirt.com/>.

Save These Dates!

- **October 21** Parish Breakfast (every third Sunday at 9:00 a.m., in the parish hall)
- **October 24** Adult Forum begins reading "The Episcopal Story: Birth and Rebirth," by The Rev. Thomas Ferguson, 9:15 a.m. in the Chapman Room
- **November 3** Loaves and Fishes Empty Bowls Fundraiser, 6:15 p.m. Tickets: <https://loaves.org/events/empty-bowls/>
- **November 4** All Saints Sunday services at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m., **in-gathering of intention (pledge) cards**
- **November 22** Thanksgiving Day service
- **December 2** First Sunday of Advent
- **December 16** Advent Lessons and Carols at the 10:30 a.m. service

A Message from Our Wardens

By Michael Roman, Senior Warden and Pamela Talbot, Junior Warden

Much has happened this past year! We've said farewell to some people and welcome to some other people, we've concluded an interim period, and we have brought our physical plant and other infrastructure to where it needs to be. All this did keep us busier than usual, but we continued to do God's work, both in St. John's, and in the communities in which St. John's is embedded.

During the interim period, some people have moved on and we have lost some people, most notably Betty Kelts, Sarah Richtmyer and Mitch Youngling. We were glad to have them in our parish life, and we will miss them. We have had some losses, but God has blessed us with the arrival of new people. First and foremost, we have our new rector - the Rev. Megan Castellan! The Holy Spirit clearly was at work bringing Mtr. Megan to us; we look forward to a fruitful time with her leading us into our future as the Episcopal Church of the 21st century in Ithaca. We also have a new parish administrator, AnnMarie Hautaniemi; Sarah Richtmyer, our previous parish administrator left some very large shoes to fill, and AnnMarie is doing just that! Also, at the beginning of September, we also welcomed our intern, Patricia Kinney, and a new ECC Chaplain, Taylor Daynes.

The interim period, which has lasted three to six years (depending on your perspective), was a time of learning for us. One important lesson we learned was that we lay people should do more of the church's ministry and not rely on clergy to do everything for us. We also got better at taking care of each other. We have lay people leading worship services and providing pastoral care, to name just a couple examples of things we used to rely exclusively on clergy to do. Also, our vestry has made significant progress toward being spiritual leaders of St. John's, as well as attending to the business end of running a church.

We have been upgrading our infrastructure and are caught up with all our deferred maintenance; gas and water leaks have been fixed, the sidewalks around St. John's have been replaced, the roof has been reinforced, our beautiful windows are completely refurbished, and we are considering repositioning the stone tablets (reredos) so as to better show off the windows over the altar. Our physical plant has served us well for nearly 150 years and is ready to support our ministries for the next 150! Our buildings are already in use

almost all the time; when we are not using them, other groups such as Loaves and Fishes, Education for Ministry, Episcopal Peace Fellowship, AA, and an African Dance class use our buildings on a regular basis. We also play host to one-time events, such as the Special Service to Commemorate the Life of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King this past April 4, and the Celebration of New Ministry, when we welcomed our new rector, the Rev. Megan Castellan September 24.

We have been upgrading our electronic presence as well as our physical presence, since part of being the modern church is reaching out to the community in places where the community has expanded to in the 21st century. An important part of the community we need to be reaching out to is on the web, Facebook and Instagram. Our website (<http://stjohnsithaca.org>) has been modernized, and we have a page on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsithaca/>) and Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/stjohnsithaca/>). Also, Mtr. Megan has a blog at <https://redshoesfunnyshirt.com> and she has instituted the Fledgling (our brief weekly newsletter - email our office to subscribe). We highly recommend checking out these sources of worthwhile content.

Last, but most certainly not least, in addition to the ministries we have been doing all along, we have taken on some new ones. We have made progress toward being even more of an inclusive, progressive, diverse and welcoming Christian community, dedicated to loving others as Christ has loved us. We've had our Mass in the Grass at Stewart Park, and we took part in the well-attended, all-inclusive and successful Pride Service at First Baptist Church. St. John's is taking part in Learning Communities Initiative, which will help us in the transition to being the church of 21st century. Your vestry has voted unanimously to support and endorse the Poor People's Campaign. Our Laundry Love project is near completion; people who would not otherwise be able to do their laundry will soon be able to do it here!

Of course, none of this happened all by itself. We are proud to be part of such an excellent parish as St. John's. Everyone here has made valuable contributions, but we wish to make special mention of Mary Arlin, Susie Backstrom, Marcia Baum, Stephanie Nevels, Brett Oakes, the Reverend Rich Towers, the Reverend Barb Schmitz and all the others of us who have helped us progress to the next stage in the life of St. John's.

Help the Church Plan with Your Pledge

By Jim Johnson, Stewardship Committee Chair

In Genesis, after God made the earth and all of creation, it was all given to mankind to be the stewards/caretakers of it. I am not going to say a thing about how we have managed this charge, but do note that it was and is presented to us as a gift from God. Hence, all we have or ever will have is a gift from God.

Time after time, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, we are told that we are to love God and do justice. These two things are intertwined throughout the Bible. Doing justice is often defined as taking care of the widow, the orphans, and the stranger in your land. In other words, this would be seen to be those of us who are the weakest and least powerful, the hungry, the homeless, the refugee.

In recent history, some of this has been co-opted by the government. Now there is less of this being done by them. This leaves it, once again, up to the church, us as Christians, to do more.

The church, if it is to do more, needs to receive more of the gifts God has given to us. One way for this to happen is for all of us, when we receive our pledge requests, to look at them seriously. The growth of the mission of St. John's depends on all of us. Please prayerfully fill them out and return them. Making a budget without an idea of income is quite difficult and receiving your pledge helps the church to plan for the coming year.

Mother Megan mentioned in her sermon on September 2 the faith/works dichotomy. But really, Paul and James are not opposed to one another. They are talking about both sides of the same coin: faith without works is dead and works without faith is meaningless. One of the works that our faith can lead us to do is to return a fraction of our gifts from God to the church so that it can do the ministry that it is called to do.

Online Giving is Now Available!

We're pleased to announce that you can now give to St. John's online! Fulfill your pledge, give to the capital campaign, send a memorial gift, a special offering, or give to the general fund with just a few clicks. You can set up your gift to occur immediately, or set up automated giving that fits your schedule and budget.

Visit <https://tithe.ly/give?c=417610> to get started.

If you have questions, contact the office at office@stjohnsithaca.org or (607) 273-6532.



Ring the bells!

Bell choir rehearses most Sundays following the late coffee hour and performs on special occasions during worship throughout the year. Practice will be starting up again soon! The multi-generational group welcomes additional ringers; the more, the merrier! For more information, email the church office at office@stjohnsithaca.org or speak with Mike Roman or Karen Hindenlang, director of music.

Subscribe to Get News from Our Diocese!

You can subscribe to The Messenger newsletter from the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York but visiting <https://cnyepiscopal.org/news-events/messenger/> and entering your email address under "Subscribe." You'll get current happenings and news from the bishop, the Episcopal News Service, as well as other churches in our diocese.

For news from the national church, y2rou can also subscribe to news from the Episcopal News Service at <https://www.episcopalnewsservice.org/>.

Music Notes

By Karen A. Hindenlang, Director of Music

Turn Over in our Chancel Choir and Balcony Bells is a fact of life in this vibrant academic community! At the end of each semester, we lose friends and participants to graduations, completed research projects, conclusion of internships, employment moves, etc. This means there is always room for — and need of — new singers and ringers in both ensembles. Please consider joining us as we collaborate to create musical offerings for worship. And keep an ear out for musical visitors in the congregation, and introduce them to me!

New Members in choir this fall include (pictured right) Virginia Douglass, Rachel Clarkson, Jen Dodwell and Jerome Fung. Virginia, our newest Choral Scholar, is an Ithaca College (IC) voice major from New Windsor, MD. Rachel works for Tompkins Trust, and her spouse Michael just completed our EfM program. Jen and Jerome recently moved here from Waltham, MA. Jerome is a new Asst. Prof. (Physics) at Ithaca College. Jen continues to serve on a Rector Search Committee member for Christ Church Episcopal, where they both sang in the choir. Not pictured are Andrew Sprague, a new IC Choral Scholar from Apalachin, NY, and Max Hylton Smith, a Ph.D. candidate in musicology at Cornell. Max hails from Kentucky and did his undergrad work at Sewanee.

Julius Eastman (1940-1990), an avant-garde, African-American performer and composer of classic and pop-style music, is gaining increased attention with a recent biography and some new recordings. According to a French researcher who visited St. John's earlier in September, Eastman got his start in music as a boy soprano singing in our church choir! The researcher is working on a Ph.D. dissertation at Université Paris Saclay about Eastman's work, and is eager for any tidbits of info he can unearth about the composer's musical experiences in Ithaca and at St. John's Church. Checking with two of our former Music Directors, Fr. A. Richard Strauss and Dr. George E. Damp, I found that they remembered Eastman and were able to share insights with the Ph.D. student. Should other friends or members of the parish have memories to contribute, please let me know and I will put you in touch with Jean-Christophe.

Our Choral Scholars assist in services and gain experience in sacred music while studying at Ithaca College. The program enhances our liturgies, supports our volunteers, sustains our musical heritage and encourages a new generation of church musicians. Donations are welcome and needed as we begin a new school year. Gifts to St. John's marked "Choral Scholars" are placed in a special fund for this successful program, and **during the month of October, all donations up to \$1000 are being matched by a member of our parish.** You can drop your gift in the offering plate or send it to the church office. Thank you for your help — past, present, and future!

Instrumentalists who enhanced our worship this past summer included Matti Oakes ('cello), Robin Steuteville (double bass), George Damp (piano), and Mike Griggs (banjo). The banjo prelude is up on our music program's YouTube Channel, in case you missed it! See <https://youtu.be/x-R6cW9j4PE>.



Back (left to right): Virginia Douglas, Rachel Clarkson.
Front: Jen Dodwell, Jerome Fung.

Education for Ministry Graduation

The Rt. Rev. Dr. DeDe Duncan-Probe joined us June 16 to graduate Lloyd Hall and Michael Clarkson from the Education for Ministry (EfM) program. Prior to graduating, Michael and Lloyd presented sermons to the parish, sharing some of their experiences and thoughts on the EfM program. Also, Jim Johnson retired from EfM mentoring and was honored at the EfM luncheon following the June 16 service. Enjoy these photos and transcripts of Lloyd and Michael's sermons.

Photo credit: Libby Hedrick.



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Education For Ministry Sermon: Lloyd Hall

I have seen the word "Sikhism" for years. I was not sure if the pronunciation was 'sick' or 'seek'. I have known nothing real about this religious group and its beliefs up until last Sunday. Why? I don't know why or how I have been so ignorant of something so beautiful and potentially profound for so long, but I do know why I am now not quite as ignorant as I was before.

As my wife sat with the TV remote in hand, scrolling through the way too numerous options, she happened on an episode of United Shades of America, hosted by W. Kamau Bell (CNN documentary series). In this episode, Bell, who interviews groups often at odds with the mainstream of the nation, interviews a very open and caring Sikh community about its beliefs and some of the common (all too common) bits of misinformation about them. (They are not Muslim for instance.) For some reason I couldn't just pass it up. I had to grab the opportunity to learn something that until then had not risen to the level of my wanting to be bothered with it. Why?

EFM (Education for Ministry) would not let me simply pass up a chance to learn more about a different religious tradition. It would not allow me to continue to comfortably wallow in my unintentional but significant ignorance about a group that exists in my own community and that, as I was quickly learning, has a set of core beliefs that I would strongly like to emulate; to practice radical love for others and strive for social justice so intently that service to others becomes more important than almost anything else.

But EFM's focus on giving me the responsibility to form my own theological journey through scripture (old and new testament), through special readings (a different set for each of the four years of the program), through Christian history (covering all continents), through a great deal of conversation, and finally through a tool called "Theological Reflection" (TR), all of this has encouraged me to keep my eyes, my mind and my heart open for the differences and similarities around me. I have been pushed to always question my too easily held (and frequently wrong) assumptions. I have begun to see how many of the thoughts and feelings elicited by the weekly readings and discussions can be reflected in other parts of my life. When a driver rushes through the school zone near my home, do I think he is deliberately trying to risk the lives of our kids or is he distracted because of some profound loss he has recently suffered? I need to open my heart more. When my neighbor espouses a strong belief that her religious tradition has helped her find meaning and direction in a crazy world, is

she necessarily saying that my different tradition is incapable of doing the same? Probably not.

And despite what it sounds like, EFM is not preparation for those who have decided to go into ordained ministry. God forbid I ever imagine that for myself. But it is instead preparation for a journey to discover your vocation/your own personal ministry. The two hours spent each week from September to June with a group of nine or ten fellow inquirers, has pushed me to think of my own spiritual and theological trip, and to answer in very real terms how my behavior and beliefs are playing a part in the coming of God's kingdom. It was a novel idea for me to think that "Thy kingdom come" meant explicitly that I was to have a role in making that happen.

Please bear with me for just a moment to see if you can catch a glimpse of how this study has begun a transformation that will hopefully continue in me. I admit to this being used at a recent gathering of EFM folks at a retreat outside of Utica.

Close your eyes and picture a very detailed portrait of Jesus laughing, not just smiling but actually laughing. His eyes are sparkling. His white teeth are fully exposed. His head is tilted back ever so slightly in order to get all the breath he needs to release the hearty – dare I say heartfelt – laugh. Now with your eyes still closed, imagine just for a moment a set of circumstances that might make him laugh like that. Also think about what it feels like for you to see him laugh like that. What in our world today could give rise to that sort of joy in him? What in today's world could take away that sense of joyous celebration?

You have just engaged in some of the basic pieces of a TR, a theological reflection. You have taken your traditional notions of Christ and his behavior, and you have placed them into a situation that is not very common. You then attempted to make some sense of it, and you identified the very real things represented in the making and the breaking of the mood brought forth by the picture in your mind.

This is the reality in which I currently find myself. I challenge what I think I believe. I try to look at the beliefs of other with an eye to viewing things as they, the other, might view it, without pre-judging, and with as few preconceived notions as possible. And I am trying to then find where their joy and goodness overlaps with the joy and goodness I have in my own religious/theological tradition and beliefs.

It is a journey. There are others on the same road. I am trying to look at my encounters with them as opportunities to know my God in more, and new, and wonderful ways. And I will try to better reflect/model the best that my religious tradition has to offer to those I meet. And sometimes we all just want to be a member of the Church of Being less horrible to others, as suggested by one of my favorite Internet bloggers, John Pavlovitz.

At this point I still don't know a great deal about Sikhs other than they have a humongous, free, colorful festival every year in one of the major agricultural areas of California, and the men in particular cover their hair as a visible sign of their faith. There is so much more to explore, to ingest, to discover and to apply. I hope you'll consider joining an EFM group. It would give me great pleasure to explore the details with you.

Education For Ministry Sermon: Michael Clarkson

What would it be like to have a tongue of fire over my head? What would it be like to look out and see tongues of fire above all our heads? Would we feel the heat? Would it illumine our sight? Or burn so brightly we couldn't bear to look? Would we be like Moses' burning bush—unconsumed? Or would the flame reduce us to ash, and the wind blow it away—like dust?

That's where this story began, with dust, back on Ash Wednesday. (You remember, Feb. 14, Valentine's Day.) "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Then the 40 days of Lent, culminating in the completion of Jesus' Passion, the triumph of the resurrection. Then the 40 days from Easter to Ascension Day, when the WORD made flesh (as we celebrated at Christmas), returned glorified and enthroned in heaven—the flesh made WORD, as it were. But the story didn't end there. Jesus promised not to leave his first disciples, nor us, alone. And so today we celebrate the 50th day since Easter, Pentecost. In the liturgical calendar, an "octave of octaves."

So, we are carried along in the story of salvation, from dust to fire and one day again to dust. But not just dust. Beloved dust [the title of book by Robert Hughes, Prof. of Divinity at Sewanee, one of our Episcopal seminaries]. So beloved by God that the Holy Spirit comes to animate those first disciples on Pentecost with tongues of fire, transforming their story once more.

That same Holy Spirit comes today and every day to transform us. To convert each person from sin and despair to new life and new being. Like all developing life, that conversion requires growth, and growth can come slowly. In the Christian life, we pass through birth into the world, birth into the Church through baptism, maturity marked by the Rite of Confirmation. All the while deepening our understanding through worship, Sunday School, catechism, Bible study, shared service (perhaps Loaves and Fishes). All creating a gradual revelation of God's eternal purposes.

Gradual revelation is hard though. We want the answers, and we want them now. I imagine Jesus' disciples faces falling when he told them, "I still have many things to say to you," ... then refused to go on. Sitting there, on the edge of their seats, waiting for wisdom. But no. "You cannot bear them now," says their master. In modern language, "No spoilers." "That would be telling."

Certainly, our shared understanding of the Holy Spirit has been gradual. "God" or "Creator" or "Father"? Sure. We have loads of Hebrew Bible for a start. "Jesus" or "Christ" or "Word" or "Son"? Sure. We have the New Testament for that. But what is this Holy Spirit? What meaning are we to make of it?

The Nicene Creed—the original creed of the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD that is, not what we find in the BCP—doesn't offer much help. After the bits we all know and will soon recite about "We believe" in God the Father Almighty and in one Lord Jesus Christ, it more or less ends just with this abrupt statement: "And in the Holy Spirit." Full stop. No more explanation.

It took another half century until the Council of Constantinople (381) or maybe even another century or so until the Council of Chalcedon (451)—the record is obscure—to reach more or less what we have in the BCP: proceeding, worshiped glorified, one holy catholic and apostolic church, etc. And even with all that, how much do we really say about the Holy Spirit? So many words for the first and second persons of the Trinity, so few for the third.

Alistair McGrath, Professor of Science and Religion at Oxford, writes, "The Holy Spirit has long been the Cinderella of the Trinity. The two other sisters may have gone to the theological ball; [but] the Holy Spirit got left behind." (The Trinity as Sisters!) We see that Cinderella story in the text of the Creed, though with the charismatic movement in the 20th century perhaps the times are changing. Let's stay with the

Creed, though. After “we believe in the Holy Spirit,” and the worshiping and glorifying and speaking through the prophets, what do we get next? The Church. This is important.

We don't see God the Father. No one does, according to the prologue to the Gospel of St. John our patron. We don't see Jesus. He lived and died and was resurrected and ascended, but we don't live in 30-ish AD Palestine. What do we see? The Holy Spirit in the Church. Which is to say, the people here.

Look around you, if Episcopalian social politeness will allow it. If not now, look around you during communion, or during coffee hour. Dare to see those tongues of fire hovering over each of you. Dare to believe that the Holy Spirit dwells in each of you. Dare to be transformed by that life-giving power into the beloved dust that you truly are. And have the audacity to take that transformation out of these walls into the world around you: Ithaca or Lansing, Cornell or IC, business, home, or school, and be part of the gradual revelation of the Kingdom of God!

Make no mistake. The Kingdom of this world does not welcome you. The RCL (as it is wont to do) excerpts from the Gospel today instead of reading continuously. In part because what we skipped itself wouldn't make sense without backing up even further, where we read that Jesus said, “Be aware that the world hated me before it hated you.” When Jesus goes on to foretell the sending of the Advocate, the Spirit of Truth, the Greek word used is *parakletos*. A legal term, essentially an attorney. “Para” meaning close beside. “*Kaléo*” meaning to make a call. Someone who is able to make a right judgment call because they are close enough to the situation.

Knowing that, re-read John 15:25. The Advocate will do what? Testify on Jesus' behalf. To be Jesus' attorney. Jesus was on trial by the world. Is still on trial by the world. And the Advocate comes to testify in Jesus' defense.

First: the world believed Jesus to be sinful. He blasphemed! He made himself the Son of God! Heresy! WRONG says the Advocate. Jesus did not sin. He is the Word made flesh made Word again. And by the power of the Spirit, we may believe that truth.

Second: the world believed Jesus to be unrighteous. He had a demon! He died shamefully on a tree! WRONG says the Advocate. Jesus ascends to receive glory and honor and power. And by the power of the Spirit, we may believe that truth.

Third: the world believed Jesus to be condemned in judgment. WRONG says the Advocate. Jesus is not the one pronounced guilty. The dark powers of sin and wickedness are themselves found guilty and revealed for what the ultimately are: nothing. Powerless in the face of the Easter triumph of the Lamb. And by the power of the Spirit, we may believe, share, and be transformed by that truth.

Now on to verse 27. “You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.” That charge is to the first disciples, yes. But it echoes through two millennia to us today in this room. We are advocates. We are close at hand. We are asked to make the right judgment call. What an awesome responsibility. By myself I could never accomplish it. How good then that God the Holy Spirit dwells within me and you. That same spirit that inflamed the disciples at Pentecost.

In Acts story, the Greek word for the spirit is different than in John; Acts uses *Pneumatos*. “Wind” or “breath” or “spirit.” Wind can't be seen. Only how it moves other objects, carrying them along, lifting them up and setting them down. Breath can't be seen. Oh, you can see a person breathing, you can see moisture escape your lips in a cold Ithaca winter (or spring, or this year, summer). But breath itself is usually imperceptible. We can't touch wind or breath, but we can feel them. We hear their impact.

And so, it is with that third meaning of *Pneumatos*: spirit. We feel the spirit. We hear its impact. And we as advocates become that impact, transforming the world, gradually revealing the Kingdom of God.

Which brings me at last to EfM, Education for Ministry. Actually, I've been talking about EfM all along. Let's rewind.

I started with story, the story of Christmas to Ash Wednesday to Easter to Ascension to Pentecost. EfM is about story. Each year every participant practices telling their own story of the Christian faith as shown forth in their own life. “Spiritual autobiography” is what it's called. Hearing the stories of other participants is one of the great gifts of EfM.

I continued with gradual revelation of the Holy Spirit. EfM is about that continued, gradual revelation of the Christian faith. Year 1 reads the Hebrew Scriptures. Year 2 reads the New Testament. Year 3 reads church history. Year 4 reads theology. It's a process of continued maturation. God still has many things to say to us through that scripture and tradition, things that in our prior Christian education we weren't ready to hear. Maybe things that are hard to hear. There is horribleness in

the Bible. There has been and is horribleness in the Church and the history of Christian thought. It's there because all Christians, you and I included, have that horribleness within—that sinful, fallen nature. EfM will not spare you that. But EfM will give you a community of brothers and sisters with whom to share that burden, and discover beyond it a new salvific beauty.

After gradual revelation, I talked about the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. If we were to read just a few verses ahead from where we stopped in Acts today, we'd reach 2:42, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer." Teaching, fellowship, bread, prayer. All are signs of the Holy Spirit. All are present in our group here at St. John's. Teaching one another. Fellowship with one another. Sharing the Eucharist with one another. Prayer with one another.

And I finished by remarking on the effects of the Spirit and how it is felt through and by all of us. That effect is the end and beginning of Education for Ministry. Application of what you learn in EfM is the point: to take your own experience, put it into dialog with the Christian tradition, to make meaning out of that dialog, and to apply that meaning in realizing the Kingdom of God in the world around you.

Thanks to EfM I am here today, doing my best to proclaim the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a way that I feel called to do. I can't tell you where your EfM experience will lead, or what EfM will be like for you. (That would be telling. Spoilers, remember?) Your Education for Ministry waits with eager longing to be revealed.

Let me close by quoting Presiding Bishop Michael Curry from the royal wedding at which he preached yesterday morning, himself quoting Jesuit scientist and theologian, Pierre de Chardin: "What paralyzes life is a lack of faith, and lack of audacity. Spirit must be a condition of progress. The day will come when, after harvesting the ether, the winds, the tides, [even] gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love. And, on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, humanity will have discovered fire."

So: don't "do" EfM. Rather, grow in and be transformed by the Spirit. Do the ministry to which you are called. Consider whether EfM might empower you to discover that ministry more deeply. As that ministry is revealed, as it is being revealed, as it gradually will be revealed, that tongue of fire is burning hotter over your head, blazing to reveal you as the beloved dust that you are.

Members of St. John's Participate in AIDS Ride for Life

By Robin Steuteville

On Saturday, September 8, I (Robin Steuteville) and three other members of St. John's — Margaret Johnson, Charles Ciccone and Carrie D'Aprix — participated in the AIDS Ride for Life. This ride, which is 102 miles long, benefits the Southern Tier AIDS program, a program which works prevent disease, coordinate care, and advocate for the vulnerable in our community. In doing so, it has helped and even saved many lives.

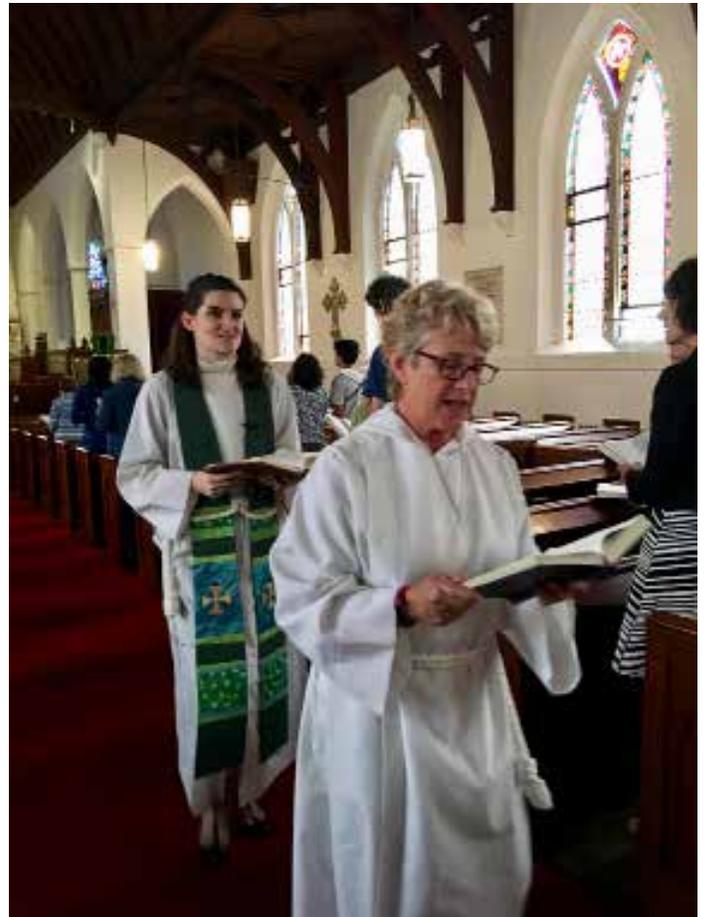
This was the second time I have done the ride, and it is amazing not only for the challenge and the friendships formed, but also because of the knowledge that it benefits such a great local cause. As part of the ride, every rider collects donations for the Southern Tier AIDS program. You can still donate, and if you're interested in doing so, the link is <https://www.firstgiving.com/event/stapride/aids-ride-for-life-20th-year-2018>. Once at this site, you can search for individuals and donate through their pages.



Around the Parish

Libby Hedrick stays busy taking photos at various events and sometimes just because. Enjoy this photo gallery.









Contribute to Communications, Commitment-Free

Did you know that you don't have to be on the Communications Committee to contribute to communications at St. John's? We'd love to receive articles or photos from all members of the parish. Are you an aspiring writer? A budding photographer? An audiovisual expert or a videographer? There's always something for you to do here at St. John's. Talk to one of the Communications Committee folks and we'll let you know what's needed, or let us know what kinds of things you're interested in doing, seeing, or reading about. Maybe there are things you'd like to see done that we hadn't thought of doing or haven't had time to do. Committee members are Jamie Parris, Sara VanLooy, Michael Roman, Margaret Johnson, and Libby Hedrick. If you're interested in joining the committee, though, let us know! We meet monthly when schedules permit.

Contributing to the Eagle

The St. Johns' Communications Committee welcomes articles and ideas for articles from the St. John's community, especially those regarding parish events, programs and services, achievements or volunteer activities, and other news of interest to our parish. Parishioners with ideas for articles they wish to write or an event or topic they would like covered, or who would like to write regularly for the newsletter are invited to contact any Communications Committee member. The committee reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, length and content.

Communications Committee Members:

Libby Hedrick, Margaret Johnson, Jamie Parris (chair), Michael Roman, Matthew Sanaker, and Sara VanLooy.

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